

Materials provided by:

**Gregory Donat
Tippecanoe Superior Ct**

01/01/2009 through 07/31/2009

D04-SC Cases*Sum Incoming Cases**

New Filings	1,516
Reopened Cases	2
Total Incoming Cases	1,518

Sum Outgoing Cases

Entry of Judgement	2,134
Placed on Inactive Status	0
Total Outgoing Cases	2,134

Calculate Clearance Rate 140.58%
(sum Outgoing / sum Incoming)

D04-CM Cases**Sum Incoming Cases**

New Filings	214
Reopened Cases	0
Total Incoming Cases	214

Sum Outgoing Cases

Entry of Judgement	286
Placed on Inactive Status	0
Total Outgoing Cases	286

Calculate Clearance Rate 133.64%
(sum Outgoing / sum Incoming)

D04-FD Cases**Sum Incoming Cases**

New Filings	59
Reopened Cases	0
Total Incoming Cases	59

Sum Outgoing Cases

Entry of Judgement	17
Placed on Inactive Status	0
Total Outgoing Cases	17

Calculate Clearance Rate 28.81%
(sum Outgoing / sum Incoming)

Clearance Rates for Superior Court 4

Measure 2

01/01/2009 through 07/31/2009

D04-CM and D04-FD Cases

Sum Incoming Cases

New Filings	273
Reopened Cases	0
Total Incoming Cases	273

Sum Outgoing Cases

Entry of Judgement	303
Placed on Inactive Status	0
Total Outgoing Cases	303

Calculate Clearance Rate 110.99%
(sum Outgoing / sum Incoming)

Case Summary By Case Type By Month

Month	Total Cases	Incoming	Outgoing	Clearance Rate
*D04-SC				
January	597	177	420	237.29%
February	501	158	343	217.09%
March	587	202	385	190.59%
April	472	201	271	134.83%
May	461	198	263	132.83%
June	510	195	315	161.54%
July	524	387	137	35.40%
D04-CM				
January	67	19	48	252.63%
February	50	12	38	316.67%
March	83	25	58	232.00%
April	103	27	76	281.48%
May	68	37	31	83.78%
June	81	50	31	62.00%
July	48	44	4	9.09%
D04-FD				
January	12	5	7	140.00%
February	9	5	4	80.00%
March	6	3	3	100.00%
April	11	11	0	0.00%
May	14	12	2	16.67%
June	17	16	1	6.25%
July	7	7	0	0.00%

Time to Disposition for Superior Court 4

Measure 3

Case Processing Standards

01/01/2009 through 07/31/2009

Case Type Total Count Open
Small Claims (SC) 1,518

SC	Cases Disposed	Percentage	ABA Standards
30 days	829	54.61%	90%
60 days	886	58.37%	
90 days	176	11.59%	
120 days	56	3.69%	
180 days	25	1.65%	
365 days	4	0.26%	
> 365 days			

Case Type Total Count Open
Misdemeanor (CM) 214

CM	Cases Disposed	Percentage	ABA Standards
30 days	94	43.93%	90%
60 days	50	23.36%	
90 days	49	22.90%	100%
120 days	47	21.96%	
180 days	12	5.61%	
365 days	5	2.34%	
> 365 days			

Case Type Total Count Open
Felony (FD) 59

FD	Cases Disposed	Percentage	ABA Standards
30 days	1	1.69%	90%
60 days	2	3.39%	
90 days	1	1.69%	
120 days	1	1.69%	
180 days	2	3.39%	
365 days	2	3.39%	
> 365 days			

* Disposition Date must fall within reporting period to be included in cases disposed

Age of Active Pending Caseload for Superior Court 4

Measure 4

Reporting Period Date 07/31/2009

Case Type

Small Claims (*D04-SC)

Age (days)	Number of Cases	Percent	Cumulative Percent
0-30	383	1.53%	1.53%
31-60	192	0.76%	2.29%
61-90	185	0.74%	3.03%
91-120	194	0.77%	3.80%
121-150	208	0.83%	4.63%
151-180	157	0.63%	5.25%
181-210	172	0.68%	5.94%
211-240	92	0.37%	6.30%
241-270	143	0.57%	6.87%
271-300	108	0.43%	7.30%
301-330	161	0.64%	7.95%
331-365	111	0.44%	8.39%
> 365	23,004	91.61%	100.00%
Total	25,110		

Case Type

Criminal Misdemeanor (D04-CM)

Age (days)	Number of Cases	Percent	Cumulative Percent
0-30	44	4.38%	4.38%
31-60	50	4.98%	9.36%
61-90	36	3.59%	12.95%
91-120	26	2.59%	15.54%
121-150	25	2.49%	18.03%
151-180	13	1.29%	19.32%
181-210	19	1.89%	21.22%
211-240	26	2.59%	23.80%
241-270	15	1.49%	25.30%
271-300	8	0.80%	26.10%
301-330	29	2.89%	28.98%
331-365	18	1.79%	30.78%
> 365	695	69.22%	100.00%
Total	1,004		

Age of Active Pending Caseload for Superior Court 4

Measure 4

Reporting Period Date 07/31/2009

Case Type

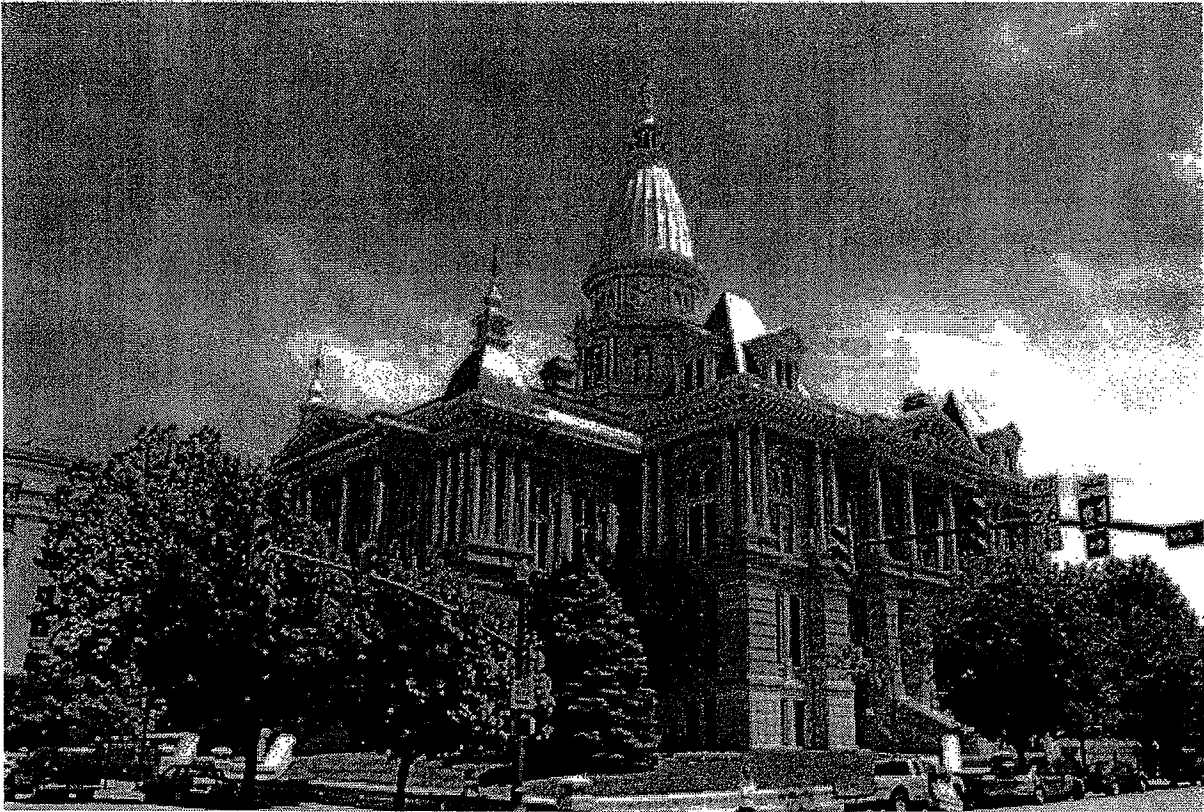
Felony (D04-FD)

Age (days)	Number of Cases	Percent	Cumulative Percent
0-30	7	1.92%	1.92%
31-60	16	4.40%	6.32%
61-90	12	3.30%	9.62%
91-120	11	3.02%	12.64%
121-150	2	0.55%	13.19%
151-180	6	1.65%	14.84%
181-210	5	1.37%	16.21%
211-240	7	1.92%	18.13%
241-270	3	0.82%	18.96%
271-300	9	2.47%	21.43%
301-330	7	1.92%	23.35%
331-365	3	0.82%	24.18%
> 365	276	75.82%	100.00%
Total	364		

*Number of cases includes open, transferred in and venued in

Printed: August 19, 2009 8:15 am

2007 version



**PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS of
ACCESS & FAIRNESS
in the TIPPECANOE
COUNTY COURTHOUSE**

2ND Edition

By Johnny Park

Superior Court IV Intern

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	2
<i>Purpose & Methodology</i>	
Summary	4
<i>An Overview of Public Opinion</i>	
I. Access	5
<i>Customer Service & Consumer Disposition</i>	
II. Fairness	8
<i>Public Perception of Procedures & Outcomes</i>	

Applications**11***Findings as a Guide to Future Solutions***Ex Post****12***Proposals for Further Inquiry***ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The design, survey and statistical analysis presented in this report were undertaken in accordance with prescribed “ Trial Court Performance Measures” as outlined by the National Center for State Courts; 300 Newport Avenue, Williamsburg, Virginia 23185.

I must gratefully acknowledge the comments, encouragement and suggestions of the Honorable Judge Gregory Donat, the entire Tippecanoe County Superior Court IV Staff and the Deputies of the Tippecanoe County Sheriff’s Department. Special thanks to Purdue Undergraduate, Adam Doerr, for his great assistance.

INTRODUCTION*Why am I reading this?*

The public’s perceptions of the Tippecanoe County Courthouse will and always has mattered. A person’s level of confidence and respect for the justice system can be directly associated with how they perceive the effectiveness of the court system. This perception will in a way dictate how they will always feel about the court house and system; positive experiences will lead to a positive outlook at the courthouse and a negative experience would entail a negative outlook.

To this end, opinion surveys are used once again to achieve the quantification of the public’s

perception and to demonstrate how their opinions reiterate the grievances they have towards the courthouse and justice system. These insights can have a significant influence to inform and affect views of the Tippecanoe County's legal environment and court management policies.

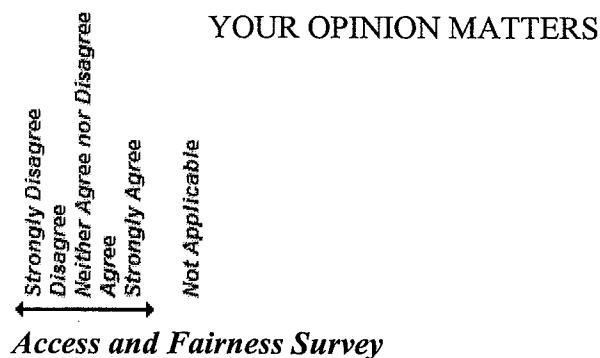
For these reasons, and to compare your views against those on the outside, you are interested in the findings of this opinion survey pinned up along side last year's findings and to situate specific recommendations.

Okay, so what did you do?

On the days of June 13th and June 15th -16th, 2007, from 9:00 to Noon on three business mornings and again from 1:30 to 4:00 pm on three afternoons, all non-incarcerated court users (excluding judges and court staff) leaving Tippecanoe County Courthouse's only public exit were asked to fill out a short, self-directed opinion survey. Using only two poll attendants, regular polling was done on three business days instead of five business days in order to try and achieve a smaller, but yet varied and accurate response rate. In the end, 143 valid opinion surveys were completed. The same format and survey as found in the 2006 Access & Fairness report by C.J. Liu was used for this 2007 report.

The opinion survey listed fifteen items in which the respondents were asked to poll their level of agreement with each item, pertaining to their view on the court's accessibility and fairness, on a 1-5 scale; 5 being strongly agree and 1 being strongly disagree. To allow variability between each respondent, necessary multiple choice questions were included pertaining to the user's point(s) of contact; intended tasks, frequency of visits and basic demographic information questions were also included. Finally, each respondent was given the opportunity to voice their opinions or concerns, including but not limited to; ideas on how to improve the court, pros and cons of their visit, by commenting at the bottom of the survey. These insights were used to formulate better solutions and enhance the statistical outcomes.

A sample of the standard opinion survey appears on the following page:



Section I: Access to the Court

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| 1. Finding the courthouse was easy. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| n/a | |
| 2. The forms I needed were clear and easy to understand. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| n/a | |
| 3. I felt safe in the courthouse. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| n/a | |
| 4. The court makes reasonable efforts to remove physical and language barriers. | 1 2 3 4 5 n/a |
| 5. I was able to get my court business done in a reasonable amount of time. | 1 2 3 4 5 n/a |
| 6. Court staff paid attention to my needs. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| n/a | |
| 7. I was treated with courtesy and respect. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| n/a | |
| 8. I easily found the courtroom or office I needed. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| n/a | |
| 9. The court's Web site was useful. | 1 2 3 4 5 n/a |
| 10. The court's hours of operation made it easy for me to do my business. | 1 2 3 4 5 n/a |

Section II: Fairness *(Answer only if you appeared before a judicial officer today)*

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| 11. The way my case was handled was fair. | 1 2 3 4 5 n/a |
| 12. The judge listened to my side of the story before he/she made a decision. | 1 2 3 4 5 n/a |
| 13. The judge had the information to make good decisions about my case. | 1 2 3 4 5 n/a |
| 14. I was treated the same as everyone else. | 1 2 3 4 5 n/a |
| 15. I know what to do about my next case. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| n/a | |

Section III: Background Information

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| Which court or office
did you visit today?
<i>(Check all that apply)</i> | What did you do at the court today? How do you identify yourself?
<i>(Check all that apply)</i> | How do you identify yourself?
<i>(Check one)</i> |
| CASA | Search court records/get documents | American Indian |
| Circuit Court | File papers | Asian |
| Clerk's Office | Make a payment | Black or African American |
| Elections & Registration | Get information | Hispanic or Latino |
| Magistrate | Appear as a witness | Native Hawaiian or |
| Probation | Attorney representing a client | Other Pacific Islander |
| Prosecutor | Jury duty | White |
| Public Defender | Attend a hearing or trial | Mixed Race |
| Superior Court I | Law enforcement/probation/
social services staff | Other: _____ |
| Superior Court II | | |
| Superior Court III | How often are you typically in this courthouse? <i>(Choose your best estimate)</i> | What is your gender? |
| Superior Court IV | First time in this courthouse | Male |
| Superior Court V | Once a year or less | Female |
| Superior Court VI | Several times a year | |
| Other: _____ | Regularly | |

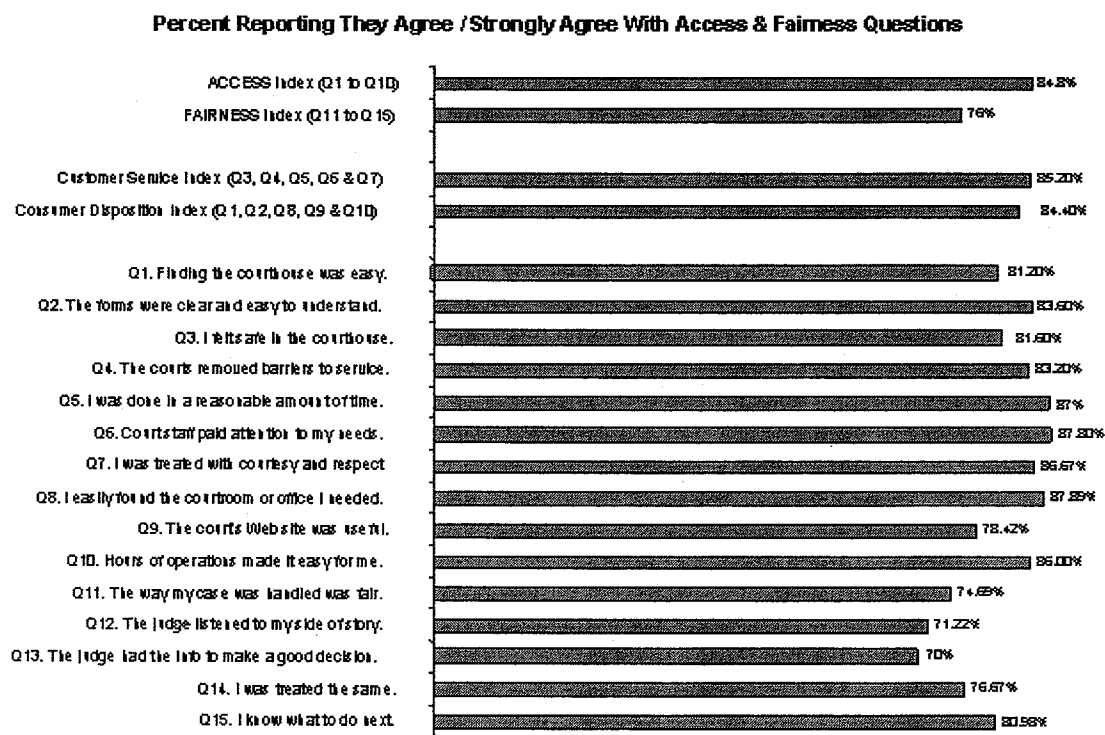
SUMMARY

Very well, what's in this report?

This report highlights the second phase of findings and comparing them to the previous year's findings from 2006, while also analyzing the effectiveness of the recommendations made from last year. Specific recommendations can be found on Page 11 of this report.

The questions that appear on the opinion survey were not altered in order to maintain accuracy and to make a correct comparison analysis to the previous year. The indexes that were created were specifically derived from the Access and Fairness Indexes. In accordance with the previous year, the Access Index was created from questions 1-10 on the opinion survey. Equally, the Fairness Index was generated from questions 11-15. The amalgamated indexes reflect the critical components of the macro level concepts, thus giving a reliable and useful look into the effectiveness of the courthouse.

To make a meaningful comparison of both data, the standard percentages for Access and Fairness are put up against the previous year's data. Using the same multivariate statistical techniques, it gives us the opportunity to make the same interpretations while maintaining the integrity of the data found this year.

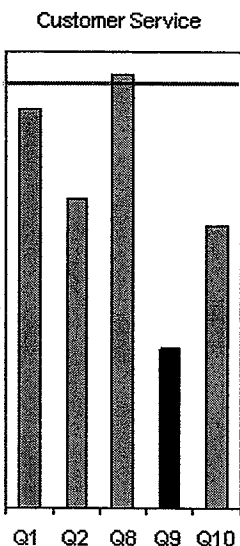


I. ACCESS

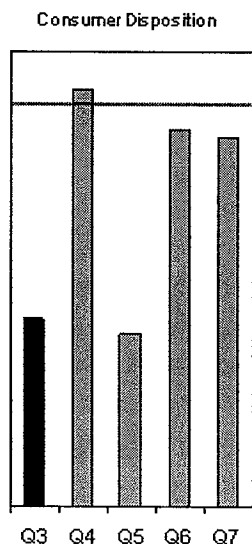
So what is this "Access Index; customer service and consumer disposition?"

To reiterate, the Access Index measures the level of the court's ease of use. Out of the first ten aspects pertaining to Access the public's rating came out to be 84.80 out of a possible 100%. In the 2006 report, the Access Index came out to be 86.29 out of 100%. Comparing these two

indexes with only a difference of 1.49, one can determine that the public's opinion on the aspects of Access will be varied by only a few percentage points at any given time.



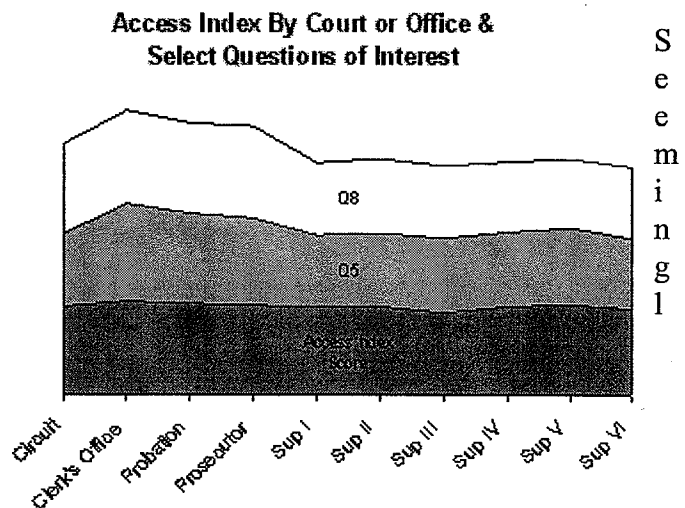
To maintain a comparative look at both years, customer service deals with how the individual perceives their treatment by the court and court staff; including respect, courtesy, accommodation and efficiency. Customer service remained surprisingly in line with last year with question 9 pertaining to the court's website. It presented the lowest percentage with some 1 percentage point below the customer service average. In comparison with last year this finding proves that many still don't know about the court's website and how to navigate it well.



Consumer disposition represents the public's ability to comprehend a variety of things within the courthouse; the understanding of court documents, the ability to find court offices and courtrooms. In contrast from last year, many individuals found it uncomfortable to be in the

courthouse. Many different reasons could cause this feeling, perhaps the amount of new users within the courthouse or just the influx of prisoners could account for the uneasiness while in the courthouse. This was ranked 2.5 percentage points below the consumer's disposition average.

How do those Access Indexes stack up for individual courts and offices?



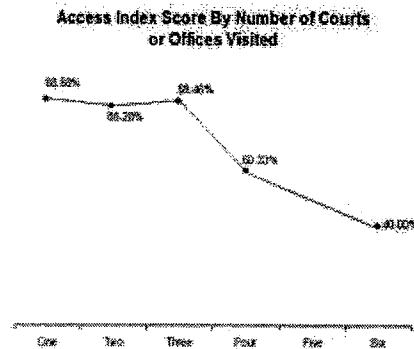
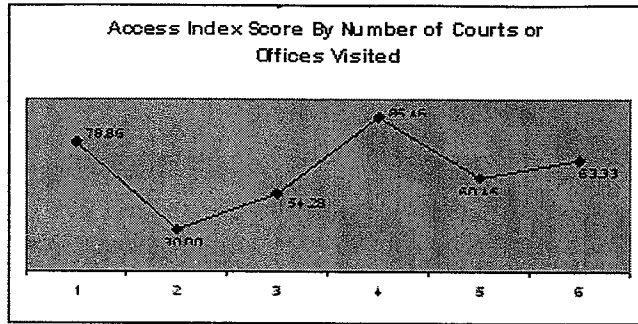
y, the Access Indexes for every individual court will vary. Looking at the same questions, a pattern is emerging from both years. Many individuals don't know how to proceed after entering the courthouse. Most of the users ask the security guards at the main entrance for help in finding the correct office or court room. Coinciding with last year, the ability to find the court offices and rooms were 9-10 percentage points lower than the average for all of the Tippecanoe County Courthouse.

In addressing the second issue about time management and efficiency, many didn't find that there was a problem in getting things done at the court house in an appropriate time frame. There was only ½ a percentage point that was below the average. Many of those who felt that they didn't have enough time were unsatisfied with their experience that day in the courthouse. The perception was equally balanced by those who felt that their time management within the courthouse was successfully done.

Do the quantity of courts and offices visited impact the Access Index?

Several individuals indicated that they had visited more than one court or office during their visit at the courthouse. Access Index scores reveal a "roller-coaster" of the number of visits to the courts or offices. Contrary to last year's findings in which there was no real drop till after the third court. This comparison cannot be linked to a pattern; the variability of the types of businesses people conduct at the courthouse is too vast to make a meaningful conclusion to the

differences of both charts.

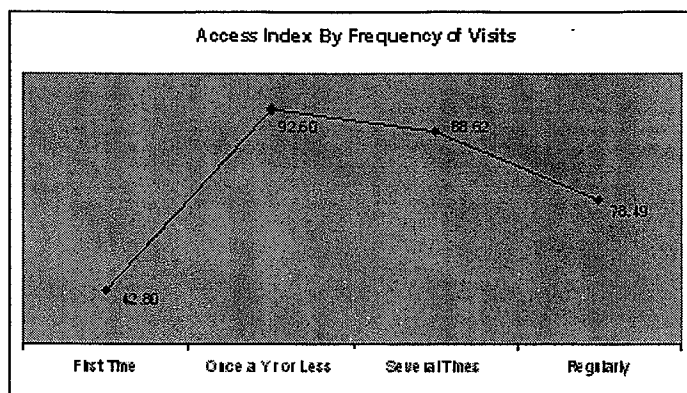


2006

2007

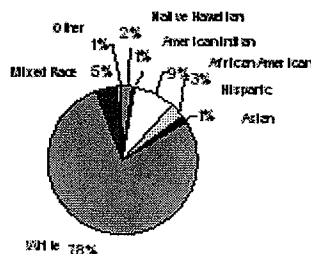
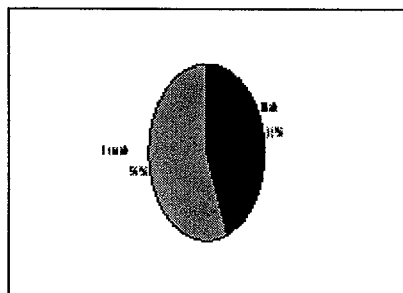
Do Access Indexes vary between first time users and those who appear regularly?

The number increased dramatically from last year of those who visited the courthouse once a year or less. The increase from last year was 11.6 percentage points, while the number of those who visited for the first time dropped 37 percentage points from 79.80%. Those individuals who had visited once a year or less were able to effectively find their way around the courthouse.



What about Access Indexes in relation to demographic affiliations?

Access Indexes by Demographic Affiliation



The demographic in this study had a profound impact on the Access Indexes. From the graph, White and African American women reported the highest measures on the Access Index. While the race remains the same throughout both years, the gender was surprising, more women than men visited the courthouse. Compared to last year, only 32% of women visited the courthouse while 62% of men visited the courthouse. This could have been caused due to the fact that more women were willing to stop and take part in the survey. The suggestion of a potential language barrier, in which the Hispanic or Latino representation in both studies, is a seemingly possible cause for concern in consumer service. This could in turn, inhibit the effectiveness and overall consumer satisfaction.

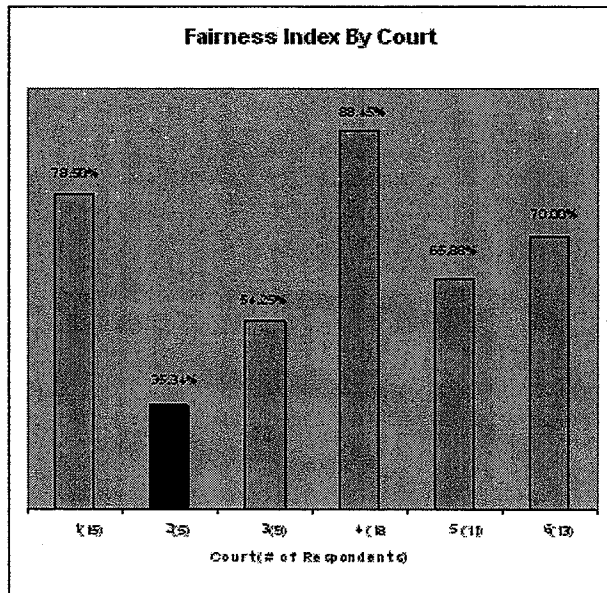
II. Fairness

Okay, now what is the "Fairness Index"?

Again reiterating the meaning of the Fairness Index, it is the measure of the public's view of the court procedures and outcomes. This index part of the survey was given to those individuals who appeared before a judicial officer. The culmination of the Fairness Index was taken from

questions 11-15. From these five aspects, an index of 76 out of a possible 100% was calculated.

How do those Fairness Indexes break down for individual courts?

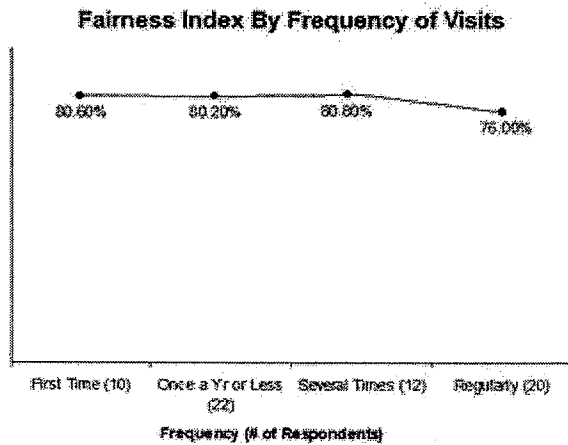
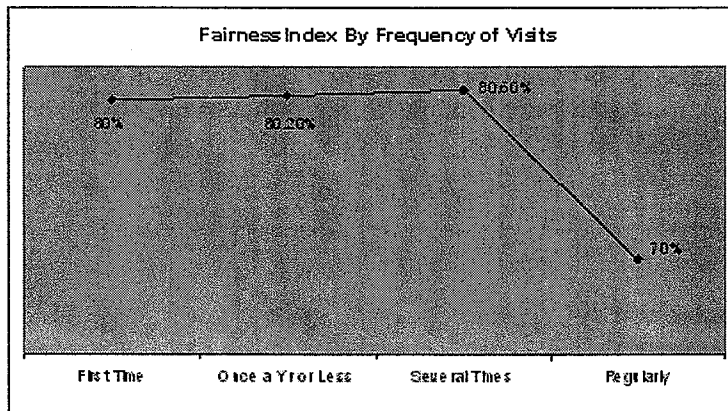


The Fairness section is hard to accurately rely on, with only 20 or fewer individuals responding to this section on the survey. The index though, examined the variables in which cases were brought forward to a judge.

Here, Superior Court II was the court in which many respondents felt that their case was handled unfairly and the outcome was unjust. Compared to last year, Superior Court III was the court in which many felt that their case judged unfavorably. The amount and types of cases each court handles will ultimately determine this trend from year to year.

Do Fairness Indexes vary between first time users and those who appear regularly?

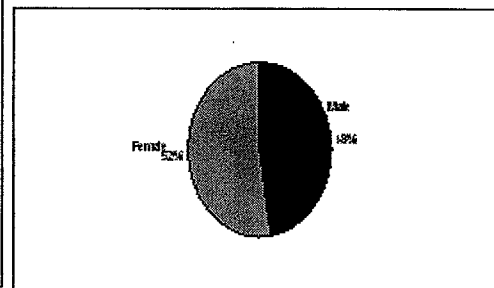
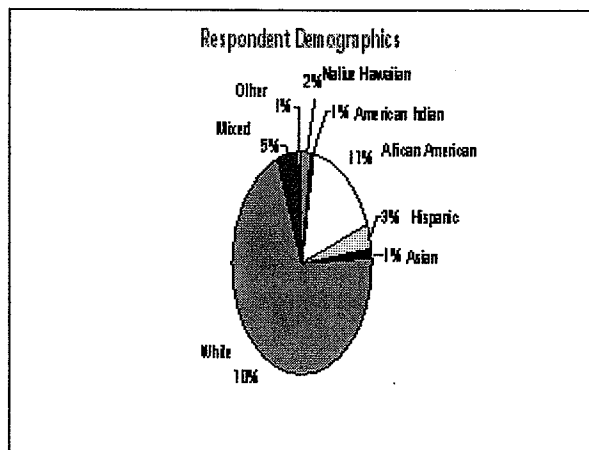
The Fairness Index shows a steady rate of those who visit the first time and those who come regularly. This doesn't, however give us favorable conclusion. The representation from last year's graph shows us a similar pattern, with a moderate change between regular visitors.



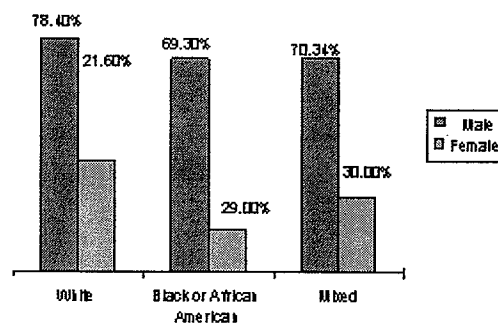
2006

2007

What about Fairness Access in relation to demographic affiliations?

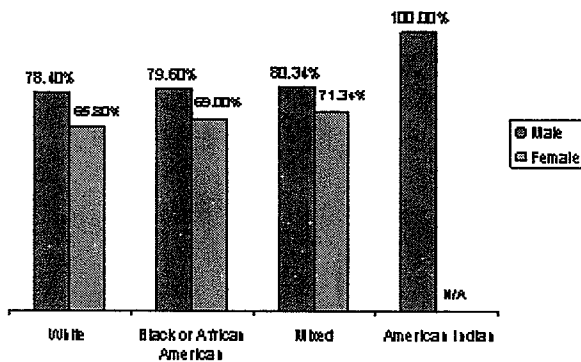


**Fairness Index By Respondent Demographics
2007**



The effects of demographics in relation to the Fairness Indexes were clear. Women again, regardless of race, viewed that they were dealt with fairness with the procedures and outcomes of their cases. On the graph to the right, women did come out to be some 30-40 percentage points lower than their male counterpart in the amount of cases brought to court. In comparison with last year (shown below), the data show similarities. Both graphs show that women were significantly lower than males in visiting the courthouse for a case hearing.

Fairness Index By Respondent Demographics
2006



In this study, mainly White men and women were participants, thus allowing bias to be incorporated in this study, more so the lack of representation of other races and their opinions. Perhaps again, a language barrier of some sort may have restrained their equal representation.

APPLICATIONS

So what does it all mean, and what can I do to bolster the Access and Fairness Indexes?

The findings of this report speak individually of themselves. In order to further improve the conditions of the courthouse to better suit the public and to continually advance the image of the Tippecanoe County Courthouse the findings present simple solutions that coincide with those from last year:

- The installation of a public directory and floor plan of the entire courthouse in the middle of every floor of the courthouse. This installation will save time and confusion in the search for the appropriate office or courtroom among first time visitors and tourists.
- The addition of a colored addendum with courthouse mailings, which shows the correct course of action pertaining to the offense. This will allow the individual to quicken their time spent in the courthouse and in turn increase consumer disposition.

These are two solutions that coincide together from this year and the previous year. Two of the solutions have been implemented within the year they were suggested. They include a more

detailed website pertaining to the courthouse and also the implementation of a separate entrance for prisoners. These two solutions have allowed for a more efficient and comfortable setting for the general public.

I believe the implementation of the two solutions above can greatly increase consumer disposition and effectively heighten the perception of the Tippecanoe County courts.

EX POST

What lingering questions warrant further research?

I believe in order to achieve variety within the findings; this survey should be given every other year. This would give more depth into the perceptions of the public's feelings on the courthouse and its efficiency. Of course the conduct of how the survey is handled will vary from each study and there are a few things I would do differently. First, I would do more of an in-depth look in the pro se litigates and how that affects the public's perception of the court system. Furthermore, I would investigate the potential barriers that those who are impaired or of a different culture are faced with in court and perhaps use translators to overcome this barrier.

This concludes the second edition of my report on Public Perceptions of Access & Fairness in the Tippecanoe County Courthouse. Further comments, questions, concerns and/or suggestions may be addressed to jjpark@purdue.edu. Thank you for your interest.

